

# WHAT IS THE FAMILY DRUG TREATMENT COURT?

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The Family Drug Treatment Court (FDTC) is a program within the Family Division of the Children's Court of Victoria.

The FDTC program is designed to assist families whose children have been placed in out of home care due to parental substance misuse. The program aims to support parents to cease use of drugs and alcohol, and address safety concerns in order to achieve family reunification in a way that is safe and sustainable for children.

Participants are supported by a dedicated team of professionals including a dedicated FDTC Magistrate, a child protection Practice Leader, a Clinical Practice Leader and Clinical Case Managers.

FDTC works in a holistic manner and works alongside a range of external support services including; Residential treatment, drug and alcohol counselling, mental health counselling, parenting and housing programs and health professionals.

The FDTC program runs for 12 months, with an optional 6 months of aftercare support available.

# WHAT DO PEOPLE SAY ABOUT THE PROGRAM?

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*"Family Drug Treatment Court helped me to get my family back together. In doing so the team at FDTC gave me unconditional non judgemental positive help, support and guidance to build a healthy loving lifestyle."*  
**FDTC Graduate**

*"I appreciate what drug court did to support me and my family through the hard times and getting my family back together."*  
**FDTC Graduate**

*"Thank you for everything. This court has turned my life around"*  
**FDTC Graduate**

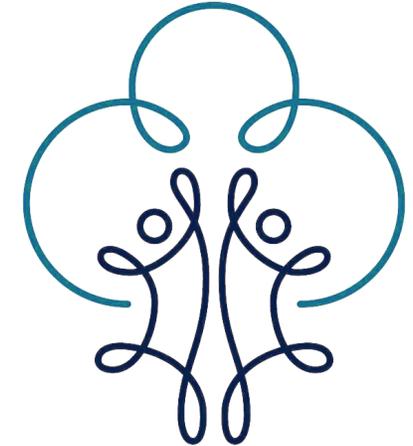
# HOW TO FIND OUT MORE?

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*The FDTC acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which the Children's Court of Victoria sits and we pay our respects to their Elders - past, present and emerging.*

# CHILDREN'S COURT OF VICTORIA

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# Family Drug Treatment Court

[www.childrenscourt.vic.gov.au](http://www.childrenscourt.vic.gov.au)



## WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR REFERRAL TO THE FDTC?

A prospective participant must:

a) Have a child/children residing out of their care predominantly due to concerns relating to substance use, and the youngest child must be aged under 3 years;

OR

b) Have a child/children OF ANY AGE residing out of their care predominantly due to concerns relating to substance use, where the duration of the out of parental care placement does not exceed 6 months.

The prospective participant must consent to the referral being made.

The prospective participant must be seeking to have their child/children returned to their care.

The child protection case must be case-managed from the Department of Health and Human Services' office that is serviced by the Children's Court the FDTC program is based in.

## WHAT CAN AN FDTC PARTICIPANT EXPECT?

The FDTC program consists of 3 phases that participants move through as their recovery progresses. In the first phase, participants must attend court each week to meet with the Magistrate and their FDTC team to discuss their recovery goals and their support needs, in addition to providing drug screens 3 times per week. In the second phase, participants are only required to attend court once per fortnight and provide drug screens twice per week, while in the third phase, court attendance is expected once per month and drug screens are requested once per week.

FDTC participants are allocated their own FDTC Clinical Case Manager who will guide the development of a Family Recovery Plan that identifies treatment strategies to address substance misuse, as well as addressing any needs associated with mental and physical health, housing, parenting, family violence and child safety, stability and development.

FDTC participants will also be expected to attend some core support programs, in addition to being able to choose to attend others.

Programs and supports include parenting, cooking and nutrition, yoga/mindfulness, safe and healthy relationships, peer mentorship, and craft.

Participants can expect to be treated with respect at all times in the FDTC program.

## WHEN CAN REUNIFICATION OCCUR?

Where the goals of the Family Recovery Plan have been met, reunification can occur at any time throughout the program. Where reunification does occur during the program, it is expected that participants continue to engage in for the remainder of the 12 months.

## WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE FDTC PROGRAM?

Outcomes for participants in the FDTC will be one of the following:

**Graduation** – occurs where a participant has successfully progressed through all 3 phases of the program and achieved all Family Recovery Plan goals; or

**Completion** – occurs where a participant completes 12 months in the program without necessarily progressing through all three phases or meeting all Family Recovery Plan goals;

**Exit** – where a participant leaves the program prior to completing 12 months, whether by choice or by Magistrate's decision. All participants are eligible for 6 months of "After Care" from the FDTC team following their program ending.

Upon a participant's FDTC program ending, the matter returns to the mainstream Children's Court for determination of what, if any, further order may be required in the best interests of the child/ren.